



CATHOLIC CHARITIES
of St. Paul and Minneapolis

1200 Second Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55403
612-204-8500
cctwincities.org

Re: Staying True to Our Values when they are Challenged

Dear Catholic Charities Board of Directors and Staff Colleagues,
I was on vacation last week at a northern Minnesota lake in the company of family and friends. I resisted (mostly) checking emails and news reports, but the tragedy in Charlottesville and its aftermath crept in and was, and is, profoundly disturbing. My parents were of the “greatest generation” which fought at unbelievable cost to defeat the Nazis and the holocaust brought upon our Jewish sisters and brothers. I am on the tail end of the “boomer” generation era during which there was much turmoil and strife in the fight for civil rights for people of color and to defeat the hate which the Klu Klux Klan espouses.

I am now sad—and angry—that in 2017 there is *any* doubt or equivocation, implicit or explicit, from *any* leader in *any* sector of this country, including the President of the United States, that the white supremacist hate promoted by the Nazis, the Klan and others with similar twisted views is legitimate in *any* way.

What we are currently witnessing in our civic culture is not “normal”, which makes it a challenge to discern when, how and how much to respond as individuals and as an organization given all of our “normal” responsibilities. This is not unique to each of us or to Catholic Charities. The “unease” felt by so many is affecting families, organizations and communities. So please recognize that you and we are not alone. Take time to talk about it, and I encourage supervisors and leaders in the organization to consider ways to help all of us do that.

We are fortunate that we have Catholic Social Teaching as our guide: Our belief in the inherent dignity of all people, our commitment to stand in solidarity as one human family, and the knowledge that there can be no common good if we legitimize the subjugation of any group of people. These teachings are the foundation of our unwavering belief at Catholic Charities that the human dignity of every person should be allowed to flourish regardless of faith, background or circumstance.

The shirt I wear as I write this has a quote on the back from Dorothy Day: “We have known the loneliness, and we have learned that the only solution is the love that comes with Community.” Each of us—and all of us together--make that love felt throughout the community each day. Let’s use this as an opportunity to recommit to our values, to each other, to those we serve and to the community.

Thank you,